

# USS Olympia back home after six-month deployment

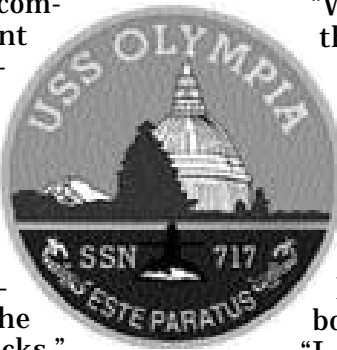
*Pearl Harbor based submarine returns after supporting Operation Enduring Freedom*

**JO2 Cori Rhea**  
*COMSUBPAC Public Affairs*

USS Olympia (SSN 717) returned to Pearl Harbor on Jan. 23 after completing a six-month deployment to the Western Pacific in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. This was the first time the crew of the attack submarine had seen their loved ones since the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

"The beginning of the deployment was very stressful for the crew because of the 9/11 attacks," said Lt. James C. Statler, Olympia supply officer.

"But after we learned that we would be participating in Operation Enduring Freedom with Fifth Fleet, the crew became very focused and motivated to perform our mis-



sions at hand."

The boat stayed busy, according to senior officials, stopping only once for liberty in Singapore during the Christmas holiday.

"We worked a lot, but for leisure the men enjoyed watching newly-released movies, playing video games, card games and exercising," said Statler, a native of Tacoma, Wash.

Twenty men decided to re-enlist during the cruise resulting in almost a half million dollars in Sailor re-enlistment bonuses.

"I noticed a newfound pride on-board as we returned to Pearl Harbor," said Statler. "For instance, many of the Sailors preferred to wear their dress uniforms out in town and while traveling on leave.

"That is something I haven't seen in awhile," he concluded.



JO2 Cori Rhea photo

Miss Hawaii 2002, Denby Dung, was the first to welcome home the Sailors of the attack submarine USS Olympia (SSN 717) after their six-month deployment to the Western Pacific. Dung placed a lei on each crew member as they stepped back onto American soil for the first time in six months.

## Navy to repair oil leak on sunken ship

*Pearl Harbor's MDSU 1 will assist on WWII ship environmental effort*

**Navy Environmental Health Center Public Affairs**

ULITHI, Micronesia (NNS) - Divers from Mobile Diving Salvage Unit (MDSU 1) based at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, will soon descend into a Pacific lagoon to stop a recent oil leak and assess the material condition of a World War II Navy oil tanker that sank in 1944.

USS Mississinewa (AO 59), a 553-foot auxiliary oiler, was commissioned May 18, 1944 and supported the ships of the 3rd Fleet in the Central and South Pacific. The huge lagoon at Ulithi Atoll was an anchorage for hundreds of Pacific Fleet ships and was a major staging area for campaigns at Leyte Gulf, Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Mississinewa was anchored in Ulithi's lagoon when it was struck by a Japanese-manned suicide torpedo, or "kaiten," on the morning of Nov. 20, 1944. The ship burst into flames and sank, killing 63 American Sailors. Fire-fighting fleet tugs pulled more than 200 Sailors from the burning waters of the lagoon.



PH2 Eric Lippmann photo

Navy diver, GM1 James C. Burger, pulls on a chain fall rigged to the civil war era "iron-clad" ship USS Monitor. Divers are working from the Derrick Barge "Wotan", which is acting as the main support vessel during the Monitor 2001 Expedition, the sixth joint U.S. Navy and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) expedition to preserve the historic vessel. The ship went down off the coast of Cape Hatteras, N.C., in 1862 during a severe storm.

the hull and attempt to seal the oil leak. The operation is expected to take one week.

This action will not be considered a disturbance of a war grave. Not disturbing the gravesite is important to the 47 living survivors of the sinking of Mississinewa who are very concerned about the resting place of their shipmates.

Once the assessment is complete, the team's findings and recommendations will be used by government agencies to determine the appropriate level of U.S. Federal assistance to

FSM. The Federated States of Micronesia were formally the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and were held in trust by the United States following WW II. In 1986, an agreement known as the Compact of Free Association granted these territories sovereign nation status.

However, the Compact does not provide for dedicated funds for an emergency of this nature, and, as a result, federal agencies will have to seek other sources of funding if it is deemed necessary that the US provide support in mitigating the oil spill.

## Pro Bowl players talk with Sailors, watch Super Bowl aboard USS O'Kane

**JO3 Christina L. Glover**  
*USS O'Kane Public Affairs*

The crew of USS O'Kane (DDG 77) welcomed National Football League (NFL) players and an ESPN crew onboard to watch the big game on Super Bowl Sunday.

Jeremiah Trotter, linebacker for the Philadelphia Eagles, and his teammate, Troy Vincent, cornerback, enthusiastically accepted the invitation to visit the O'Kane and her crew. Trotter made his decision to visit the ship based on a "sense of respect" for the military.

Upon arrival, ESPN correspondent Mike Golic interviewed Cmdr. Taylor W. Skardon, O'Kane's commanding officer. They discussed "A day in the life on-board O'Kane" - her responsibilities and her mission and how the events of Sept. 11 changed the ship and her crew.

Lt. Cmdr. Steven R. Rasmussen, O'Kane's executive officer, and Lt. Kevin M. Brand guided the guests on a tour of the ship. The tour started on the flight deck and continued onto the aft part of the ship and the mess decks, with a few stops in between.

"I wanted to see how the men and women of the Navy live," Trotter said, adding, "The beds are so small I don't think I could do it."

When the players and ESPN arrived on the mess decks, O'Kane's "big Super Bowl bash" started. Trotter and Vincent talked to many Sailors. Both of the NFL players even had their hair cut by O'Kane's barber, Ship Serviceman 3rd Class Calandra L. Stokes. Vincent usually gets his hair cut "military-style" back home and asked where he could get it done while in Hawaii.

The executive officer offered to have Stokes do it since they were already on the ship. "I needed my hair cut really bad," said Vincent. "I didn't expect to get such a wonderful haircut."

As with many great Super Bowl parties, there was an abundance of food avail-



able. Mozzarella sticks, chicken wings, Philly cheese steak sandwiches, and fruit and relish trays were arranged by Mess Specialist 3rd Class Irene N. Martinez and her galley crew. Twenty pizzas and three party subs rounded out the meal which was washed down with an assortment of soda and non-alcoholic beer.

In an intense display of interest the viewers har in the game, when one of the ESPN cameramen sat his camera down in front of the TV, one of the players yelled, "Hey, you're blocking the game!"

At different times during the game, Sonar Technician (Surface) 1st Class Charles P. Benoit raffled off door prizes. The prizes consisted of two NFL Prime Time hats, one ESPN Sports Center hat, five ESPN Sports Center T-shirts, and five Wilson NFL footballs autographed by Jeremiah Trotter and Troy Vincent. Two lucky Sailors each also won two Pro Bowl tickets.

Both Trotter and Vincent would like to say to the men and women who serve this country, "Thank you for your courage and for protecting the country and our families."

"The technology of the ship is amazing," remarked Vincent. "You can't read about it in a book or see it on the Discovery Channel or Travel Channel. They just don't come close."

Final score: Patriots 20, Rams 17. "I just want everyone to know that I predicted the game," bragged Vincent.

## Mustang aboard USNS Yukon provides example of limitless Navy opportunity

**OS1 (AW) Tristan D. Cajar**  
*USNS Yukon Public Affairs*

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and sorry I could not travel both and be one traveler, long I stood..."

The poem by Robert Frost is about choices to be made, and when they have to be made, Lt. Larry Krull does not delay.

After graduation from Orange Park High School in Orange Park, Fla., he enlisted in the Navy under the delayed entry program (DEP) in 1979.

Krull started his career in operations spe-

cialist "A" school. This school had the markings of a career with ample travel and access to many different naval platforms.

"I have been on every kind of Navy ship there is," commented the Bloomington, Ill. native. Throughout his career, Krull has been a diligent student of tactics and operations.

"I am a World War II buff. Being in Pearl Harbor is a constant reminder of our naval heritage," he said looking out of his stateroom toward the Arizona Memorial and the battleship Missouri, the "Mighty Mo".

This trend has continued during his latest

assignment onboard the USNS Yukon where the tireless officer in charge keeps expanding the learning curve of his troops daily.

Krull can be seen instructing his staff in various areas of military operations all throughout the day. He is known to "spot check" his Sailors on things like general military topics, the ship's engineering status or the newest ship to be commissioned.

"This man does not stop. He's worn me out," said a newly-reported Sailor onboard.

With Krull's experience as a former tactical action officer and as a surface warfare officer, he has made the military detachment

an efficient group which interfaces with naval units from the United States and foreign countries.

"Signals have to be given correctly, in a timely manner. Mistakes can be catastrophic in this kind of job," remarked Krull.

"OIC, Duty Milder" is heard on the radio. He is being called to attend to one of a multitude of duties he is responsible for. "OIC, go."

His radio response sums up this seasoned officer's attitude and vision of command at sea. "If you want it, go get it," is the unspoken rule of Lt. Larry Krull.